

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 200869
ORIGIN H-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12 NEA-10
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DRAFTED BY H:DJBENNET, JR.:SAS

APPROVED BY H:DJBENNET, JR.

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

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INFORM CONSUL

E.O. 11652: N/A.

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJECT: CODEL SPOUSES

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY DOUGLAS J. BENNET, JR.

1. WE CONTINUE TO SEEK WAYS TO MAKE CODEL'S MORE PRODUCTIVE AND INFORMATIVE FOR MEMBERS. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THESE VISITS PROVIDE OUR BEST OPPORTUNITY TO LET MEMBERS OF CONGRESS UNDERSTAND OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND ALSO TO DEVELOP CREDIBILITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT WHICH PAYS DIVIDENDS WHEN CONGRESS VOTES. AT THE SAME TIME, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MANY CONGRESSIONAL TRAVELLERS DO NOT FULLY APPRECIATE THE PRESURES THEIR VISITS PUT ON POSTS AND THE EXPECTATIONS THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS HAVE OF THEM.

2. MRS. VANCE HAS BEEN WORKING WITH A GROUP OF FOREIGN SERVICE WIVES AND CONGRESSIONAL SPOUSES IN A JOINT EFFORT TO DEVISE WAYS OF MAKING CODEL TRAVEL MORE PRODUCTIVE AND
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LESS ONEROUS. ONE PRODUCT WILL BE A HANDBOOK PREPARED BY CONGRESSIONAL WIVES FOR ALL TRAVELLERS CONTAINING BASIC TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS, HEALTH TIPS, INFORMATION ABOUT HOW EMBASSIES FUNCTION, WHO PAYS FOR WHAT, REMINDERS THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS MAY BE OFFENDED BY LATE SCHEDULE CHANGES, ETC. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS HANDBOOK, COMING FROM CONGRESSIONAL SPOUSES, CAN SAY SOME THINGS TO POTENTIAL CONGRESSIONAL

TRAVELLERS WHICH THE AVERAGE CONTROL OFFICER MIGHT FIND DIFFICULT TO SAY. AS SOON AS THE HANDBOOK IS FINISHED, WE WILL GET COPIES TO EACH POST.

3. WE HAVE ALSO DISCOVERED THAT THERE ARE A GREAT MANY CONGRESSIONAL SPOUSES WHO FEEL THAT THEIR OWN EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE IS NOT BEING ADEQUATELY UTILIZED DURING CONGRESSIONAL VISITS, THAT THE MEMBERS THEMSELVES ARE THEREFORE LEARNING LESS THAN THEY MIGHT, AND THAT THE TRIPS ARE LESS DEFENSIBLE TO THEIR CONSTITUENCIES. PART OF THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT SPOUSES DO NOT HAVE SECURITY CLEARANCES AND ARE THEREFORE EXCLUDED -- UNNECESSARILY, USUALLY -- FROM MOST BRIEFINGS BEFORE AND DURING CONGRESSIONAL TRIPS. WE ARE SEEKING AN ARRANGEMENT WITH OUR SECURITY PEOPLE WHEREBY CONGRESSIONAL SPOUSES WOULD BE AUTOMATICALLY CLEARED FOR PURPOSES OF A SPECIFIC CODEL.

4. NEXT, WE WILL BE ASKING WIVES WHAT SPECIAL INTERESTS THEY MAY HAVE AND ASKING THE POSTS TO DO SOME SEPARATE SCHEDULING WHERE POSSIBLE. AS SOON AS WE KNOW A SPOUSE WILL BE TRAVELLING, HE OR SHE WILL RECEIVE A LETTER FROM MRS. VANCE, MRS. NEWSOM AND MRS. ATHERTON ENCLOSING A QUESTIONNAIRE IN WHICH THE SPOUSE CAN SET OUT HIS OR HER PARTICULAR INTERESTS. USING THE INFORMATION RECEIVED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE, MY OFFICE WILL WORK WITH THE POSTS TO IMPROVE SPOUSE SCHEDULING AS MUCH AS PRACTICABLE.
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5. I HOPE WE CAN MAKE A VIGOROUS EXPERIMENT OF THIS SPOUSE TRAVEL EXERCISE FOR THE REMAINDER OF 1978, AND THEN HAVE A FRANK EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS. POSTS SHOULD COMMENT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS, ADDRESSED TO ME, AT ANY TIME. CHRISTOPHER

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Draft Date: 09 aug 1978
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
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Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1790866
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Subject: CODEL SPOUSES FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY DOUGLAS J. BENNET, JR.
TAGS: OVIP, OREP, XX, US
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Type: TE
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